

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of manufacturing a solar battery by electrically connecting a plurality of cells to one another using connection members, comprising the following steps in the order named:

a flux applying step of applying a flux to surfaces of the cells;

a disposing step of disposing the connection members over the adjacent cells to which the flux has been applied;

a string step of connecting the connection members to the cells by soldering; and

a cell heating step of heating the cells connected to the connection members.

Claim 2 (original): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein a heating temperature of the cell heating step is not less than a boiling temperature of the flux.

Claim 3 (original): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein a heating temperature of the cell heating step is not less than an activating temperature of the flux.

Response filed November 16, 2011

Reply to OA dated August 17, 2011

Claim 4 (currently amended): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein in the cell heating step, [[the]] a heating temperature is +140°C or more and +160°C or less, and a heating time is one minute or more and five minutes or less.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein in the cell heating step, [[the]] a heating temperature is +150°C, and [[the]] a heating time is three minutes.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein in the cell heating step, the heating temperature is more than +160°C, and a heating time is less than one minute.

Claim 7 (withdrawn): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein in the cell heating step, the heating temperature is +200°C or more, and the heating time is less than 20 seconds.

Claim 8 (withdrawn): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein in the cell heating step, the heating temperature is +250°C or more, and the heating time is less than ten seconds.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein in the cell heating step, the whole cells are heated.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein the cell heating step includes: heat release means for preventing a solder which connects the connection members to the cells from being molten.

Claim 11 (withdrawn): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 10, wherein the heat release means is a conveyance belt which conveys the cells and which comes into contact with at least a connection members portion during the conveyance.

Claim 12 (withdrawn): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 11, wherein, in the string step, the conveyance belt does not come into contact with the connection members portion, and in the cell heating step, the conveyance belt comes into contact with the connection members portion.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein in the string step, hot air is blown against the connection members to perform the soldering, and in the cell heating step, the cells are irradiated with an infrared ray to heat.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein in the cell heating step, the cells connected to the connection members are heated such that residue of flux is removed from [[the]] a surface of the cells.

Claim 15 (withdrawn): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, wherein in the cell heating step, the cells connected to the connection members are heated while the heat of the connection members is released to a conveyance belt which conveys the cells.

Claim 16 (New): The method of manufacturing the solar battery according to claim 1, the flux is applied before the soldering.

Claim 17 (New): A method of manufacturing a solar battery by electrically connecting a plurality of cells to one another using connection members, comprising the following steps in the order named:

a flux applying step of applying a flux to the surfaces of the cells;

a disposing step of disposing the connection members over the adjacent cells to which the flux has been applied;

a string step of connecting the connection members to the cells by soldering; and

a cell heating step of heating the cells connected to the connection members, wherein the flux is applied before the soldering.

* * * *